

III. 21 Jul 76

USSR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS  
MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA

P 1

## LE MONDE REPORTS ALLEGED BREZHNEV MESSAGE TO SYRIA

Paris LE MONDE in French 20 Jul 76 p 6 LD

[Unattributed report on 11 July Soviet message to Syria: "You Can Contribute to the Cessation of the Conflict by Withdrawing Your Forces"]

[Text] The recent 11 July message addressed by the USSR to Syria, urging it to withdraw its troops from Lebanon, has not been published. The text has nevertheless been communicated to the PLO, to Lebanese Progressive Front leader Kamal Junblatt and to various "friendly" governments including Iraq and Libya. The comprehensive extracts below have been translated from Arabic into French by LE MONDE. The text is headed: "Message from Leonid Brezhnev to the Syrian Leaders."

The Soviet leader writes: "Permit me to begin by asking you a direct question: Who are rubbing their hands with joy as they observe the events in Lebanon? Of course, the imperialists....Both you and we were convinced that the (Palestinian) resistance movement constitutes one of the principal pillars of the struggle against the Israeli aggressors and imperialism. Both you and we regarded the leaders of the resistance movement as friends and patriots representing the Arab people of Palestine.

"But what is happening now? In the sphere of motives, we observe that attempts are underway to smash the resistance and the Lebanese national movement. Who are the aggressors? They are the Lebanese rightwing forces, backed by the Syrian Army. How could we interpret the situation otherwise when we see that the Palestinian and Lebanese forces are under siege and that the Syrian Army is imposing a blockade on the (Lebanese) ports? Our observations are based on facts which reach us not through radio stations and communiques but from our own nationals on the spot, who communicate our information to us.

"How could we interpret this information otherwise when you have never yet been in a position to deliver to the Palestinians and the Lebanese the medicines and food offered to them by the Soviet Red Cross? We regret to note that the Syrian Army in Lebanon has given us no assistance in this connection.

"We know that the resistance and the Lebanese national movement are demanding an immediate cease-fire and that it is your forces which oppose the cessation of the conflict. This maintains and intensifies the bloodshed in Lebanon. We understand neither your line of conduct nor the aims which you are pursuing in Lebanon.

"It is as Friends that we express ourselves with complete frankness. And who else could speak to you in the same way? It is our duty to think of the future, both near and distant. If Syria persists in the course which it has taken, it will give the imperialists and their collaborators the opportunity to gain control of the Arab nations and progressive movements (of this region) as well as the Arab states with progressive regimes.

"We follow with concern Syria's positions and orientations on the international scene. We urge caution. We exhort the Syrian leaders to take all possible measures to end the military operations conducted against the resistance and the Lebanese national movement. The first step in this direction should be the immediate cessation of the conflict. You can contribute to this by withdrawing your forces from Lebanon. You have a good opportunity; the temporary presence of Arab forces in Lebanon.

21 JUL 76

F 2

USSR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS  
MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA

"We are convinced that these measures correspond to the interests of Syria itself. I ask you to reflect thoroughly and calmly on this subject, taking account of the dangers which I have mentioned. It would be advisable for you to consider our viewpoint, which could help you to find the right solution, a way out of a difficult and perilous situation which serves only the policy and interests of imperialism.

"It goes without saying that we are still prepared to consolidate the links of friendship between our two countries and to surmount the difficulties arising from the current situation in Lebanon. In this respect our country's friendship toward you is assured and stable. Unless Syria behaves in such a way as to cause rifts in the relations between our two countries.

"We would be grateful if you could be good enough to submit to us your ideas, taking account of the content of this message."